

PELLEAS AND MELISAND

ALTHO *Pelléas and Mélisande* is one of the most discussed and most admired of Maeterlinck's dramas, yet it is one of the most difficult of psychological analysis. It is free from intricacies in the development of the jealousy of sex-passion as displayed by Golaud, the husband of Mélisande. His is the passionate love of typical man. He is not nearly so fine a character as Pelléas, for he is not able to distinguish between physical and spiritual affinities, nor can he appreciate the pure affection, free from all sexual taint, which exists between his brother, Pelléas, and his wife, Mélisande. This drama is so very characteristic of Maeterlinck and his methods of expression that one is lost, because it is the emotion which the play creates that sways. It is "art" in the proper sense of that much abused term. "The function of art is not practical, or ethical, or scientific, or philosophic, but emotional." Further, "the nature of emotion is to disturb the mind, and hence also the language of expression."

The lovers were but children, even as Golaud himself says in the scene without the Tower where Mélisande sits combing her long tresses in the window whilst Pelléas below is passionately kissing their unbound glory. "What children! What children!"

Mme. Maeterlinck, who has oft appeared in this symphonic drama with its beautiful accompaniment of Claude Debussy music, says that it was the inten-